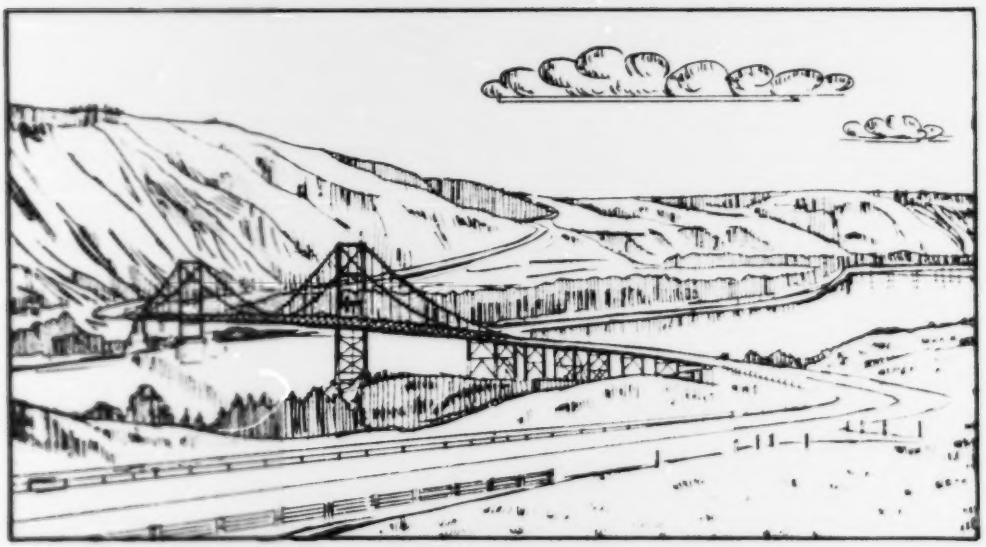
RECREATION SITES IN THE UPPER PEACE RIVER VALLEY



A JOINT PROJECT AMONG:

November 1987

88-03821/

RECREATION SITES IN THE UPPER PEACE RIVER VALLEY

1987
Edmonton

Publication Number: I/182
International Standard Book Number: 0-86499-461-3

COPIES OF THIS REPORT MAY BE OBTAINED FROM:

Information Centre
Alberta Energy/Forestry, Lands and Wildlife
Main Floor, Bramalea Building
9920 - 108 Street, EDMONTON, Alberta
T5K 2M4

Telephone: (403) 427-3590

South Peace Regional Planning Commission
202 Richmond Square
9804 - 100 Avenue
GRANDE PRAIRIE, Alberta
T8V 0T8

Telephone: (403) 532-0988

Mackenzie Regional Planning Commission
Box 450
BERWYN, Alberta
T0H 0E0

Telephone: (403) 338-3862

From the place which we quitted this morning, the west side of the river displayed a succession of the most beautiful scenery I had ever beheld. The ground rises at intervals to a considerable height, and stretches inward to a considerable distance.

At every interval or pause in the rise, there is a very gently ascending space or lawn which is alternate with abrupt precipices to the summit of the whole, or at least as far as the eye can distinguish. This magnificent theatre of nature has all the decorations which the trees and animals of the country can afford it; groves of poplars in every stage vary the scene; and their intervals are enlivened with vast herds of elk and buffalos . . . the former choosing the steep uplands and the latter preferring the plains . . . The whole country displayed an exhuberant verdure . . . the trees that bear a blossom were advancing fast to that delightful appearance and the velvet rind of their branches reflecting the oblique rays of the rising or setting sun, added a splendid gaiety to the scene which no expressions of mine are qualified to describe.

from the diary of Alexander Mackenzie
May 10, 1793.

HIGHLIGHT SUMMARY

The Peace River is an outstanding feature in northern Alberta. The local governments which border the Mighty Peace between the British Columbia border and the Town of Peace River have advocated a co-ordinated approach to the development and protection of this resource. For this purpose, these local governments have established the Peace Valley Conservation and Recreation Committee. This committee, together with representatives from several provincial departments and two regional planning commissions, examined 18 sites in the upper Peace River valley.

The decisions made in this report are based on the following principles. Any recreation site development must occur in a manner that preserves the natural environment. Recreational use and tourism in the Peace River valley can be increased substantially. Other resources in the valley, such as agricultural lands and gravel deposits, are also limited and must be considered. Any recreational or tourist facility development must consider the interests of the local communities. These principles are supported by the resource objectives for the 18 sites.

Fifteen of these sites are considered to be suitable for recreation development. These decisions, as well as the type of development for each site, were made after evaluating the following factors: present ownership and use of the land, existing and potential access, site characteristics, resource values, spacing along the river, proximity to local communities, preferences of the local people and distance to emergency services. The type (or class) of recreation development may confirm a site's existing use or identify a site's potential for future development.

The types of recreation development are as follows:

CLASS 1: RECREATION SITES WITH ROAD ACCESS

- Level A - Developed Campgrounds
- Level B - Basic Campgrounds
- Level C - Day Use Areas

CLASS 2: DAY USE RECREATION SITES WITH RIVER ACCESS

CLASS 3: NO DEVELOPMENT SITES

The completion of this plan signals the beginning of the process to develop the sites with recreation potential. The next steps required, up to and including construction and operation, are outlined in the plan. The local authorities and local people are taking the initiative in the site development process. This commitment reflects a joint understanding of the values of the Peace River valley and a common purpose in the protection and development of this significant resource. The future of recreation and tourism in the Land of the Mighty Peace looks promising.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Setting

The upper Peace River valley extends for approximately 233 km (145 mi.) between the British Columbia border and the Town of Peace River. The river flows in a well-defined, and for the most part, deep valley. Local relief varies between 180 to 335 m (600 to 1 100 ft.) and the distance between the valley breaks ranges from about 1.6 to 8.0 km (1 to 5 mi.).

The Peace River forms the boundary of several local authorities -- on the north bank, Improvement District (ID) 21, Municipal District (MD) 136 and MD 135, and on the south bank, IDs 19 and 20. Access is generally poor, with large stretches of the river inaccessible and only two bridges (one at Peace River and the other where Highway 2 crosses the river at Dunvegan). There is a ferry crossing on Highway 740, and a recently constructed bridge now connects Clayhurst and Doe River on the British Columbia side of the border. Access points to the river have usually resulted from historical use by the surrounding community, or from resource extraction or development projects (such as access to sand and gravel supplies).

The Peace River valley contains a rich variety of agricultural, archaeological, ecological, palaeontological, recreational, timber, fish, wildlife and watershed resources. Most of the land in the valley is public land but significant areas abutting the river, particularly on the north bank, are public lands under grazing dispositions or privately-owned market gardens.

1.2 Planning Background

This plan developed from the initiative of the Peace-Smoky Recreation Development Committee (renamed the Peace Valley Conservation and Recreation Committee in July 1987). The committee, initially composed of two representatives from each of Improvement Districts 19, 20 and 21, was expanded to include representatives from the Municipal Districts of Peace #135 and Fairview #136, so that all of the municipalities bordering the river upstream of the town of Peace River were represented.

The committee, formed to address the issue of recreation development along the river, wanted to see recreation sites and access points to the river developed to enhance local recreation opportunities. At the same time, it wanted to ensure that the natural beauty of the valley was maintained for future generations.

The major focus of the committee has been to identify possible recreation sites along the river. The Mackenzie and South Peace Regional

Planning Commissions helped by assisting with mapping, site planning and brochures. A 1:100 000 "Recreational Opportunities" map was produced showing potential recreation sites, land ownership and information about resources in the area. This map was displayed in municipal offices and at trade fairs.

Following production of the map, the committee sought recognition for its proposals and assistance in their implementation from various government departments and the Northern Alberta Development Council. A positive response to this request by the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife (FLW) -- the department with jurisdiction over most of the sites-- led to the initiation of this plan.

This plan reflects the principles of integrated resource management. Although co-ordinated by the Resource Planning Branch, FLW, it differs from other plans on two counts:

1. The plan focuses on recreation and tourism opportunities on a site-specific basis. Other resources are addressed but only on this site-by-site basis. Subsequent subregional integrated resource plans will provide direction for all public lands and resources within the valley as well as adjacent public lands and resources.

2. This plan is the result of a co-operative exercise involving planning authorities responsible for private and public lands and resources.

The review and approval procedure included local authorities and agencies of the provincial government.

1.3 Participants

This document has been prepared by a planning team with representatives from the Mackenzie and South Peace Regional Planning Commissions, and the Alberta departments of Culture and Multiculturalism; Tourism; Forestry, Lands and Wildlife (Alberta Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Division, Public Lands Division, and Resource Evaluation and Planning Division). The Northern Alberta Development Council and the Alberta departments of Energy, Environment, Recreation and Parks, and Transportation and Utilities have been involved on a consultative basis.

1.4 Plan Purpose

The purposes of the plan are to review the proposals of the Peace Valley Conservation and Recreation Committee and to provide direction on appropriate uses for the various sites. The plan resolves

site-specific conflicts between resources, provides direction for site development, clarifies responsibilities, and includes a strategy for future activities.

The plan has been developed in close consultation with the Peace Valley Conservation and Recreation Committee and respects the committee's stated policies:

1. The Peace Valley Conservation and Recreation Committee will participate in the planning, development and operation of the various recreation site projects proposed on the "Recreational Opportunities" map.

2. The committee will encourage and solicit strong local input from residents and municipal councils.

3. The committee will work with, not against, existing land users in the development of its plans.

4. The committee membership will include representatives from all member municipalities.

5. The committee will retain a strong voice in the continuing operation of the recreation area.

6. In developing its plans, the committee will support, as much as possible, the retention of undeveloped areas in their natural state.

Economic evaluation of the proposals is beyond the scope of this document. The financial implications of all developments should be carefully assessed in the implementation stage.

2. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR RECREATION

2.1 Recreation and Tourism Overview

The Peace and Smoky River valleys are the most outstanding geographic features of the Peace country. The Peace valley, within the Land of the Mighty Peace Tourist Zone, is by far the largest of these, and contains many diverse recreational opportunities. Much of the river valley is in a natural state and canoeing portions of the valley provides a wildland experience. There is, however, limited access to the river for canoes or boats. The width and depth of the river also provide opportunities for power-boating. Also, the river valley is used for hunting, camping, fishing, natural and heritage resource interpretation, hiking, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and cross-country skiing. The area is capable of supporting these and other outdoor activities.

The Peace River valley's rich history provides an obvious central theme for any future recreation and tourism promotional strategy. (See Heritage, p.7.) The base camp for Alexander Mackenzie's historic journey to the Pacific was Fort Fork, a fur trade and provision post located across the river from the Mackenzie Cairn site. Part of the British Columbia portion of this heritage trail is recognized in a federal/provincial recreation and conservation agreement; and an associated Master Development Plan has been produced. Another historical item with tourism implications is the D.A. Thomas steamboat, which plied the waters of the Peace between 1916 and 1930. Plans are underway to construct a replica of this vessel.

Alberta Recreation and Parks has expressed interest in two sites in the Peace River valley area. One of these, a 370 ha (920 ac.) area on the Heart River (Green Valley) near the Town of Peace River, is under a protective reservation and may become a provincial recreation area. The Silver Valley Ecological Reserve was formally established in July 1987. Ongoing management of the reserve is the responsibility of Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. A management plan for the area will be undertaken in the near future.

In the municipalities which border the Peace River, there are only two lakes with developed recreation facilities. These are Moonshine Lake in ID #20 and Lac Cardinal in the MD of Peace. Both lakes are sites of provincial parks, providing public camping, boating, water skiing, fishing and swimming. There may be some future recreation development potential at Sand Hill Lake in the MD of Fairview. In short, there are few water-based recreation opportunities available, and none with the potential of the Peace River.

The development of the river valley for recreation will also benefit local and regional residents. The amount of tourist accommodations in the vicinity of the river is above average for the population of the region and its distance from larger urban centres.

There is likely to be a demand for fully serviced campground facilities in specific high-traffic areas along the river, such as the Dunvegan Bridge site. Between Rycroft and Fairview on Highway 2, the average annual daily traffic count is 1 400 vehicles and the average summer daily traffic count is 1 510 vehicles (Alberta Transportation and Utilities, 1987). However, the economics of campground development in relation to the return may be questionable. The success of any private sector operation will depend on developing the area as a regional destination with several other attractions and activities nearby. Trail riding and boat rentals are examples of visitor services that may be feasible for the private sector to operate in conjunction with a campground.

In summary, the Peace valley has untapped recreation potential, but existing levels of visitors may currently be too low for the private sector to successfully develop new tourist operations.

2.2 Other Resources in the Valley

Agriculture:

Livestock grazing and market gardening are the major farming activities present along the river. Cereal and oilseed crop production also takes place. Most of this agricultural activity occurs on the north side of the river; the south side of the river is mostly under forest cover.

Grazing is traditional in the valley. The parkland vegetation on the north side of the river, with its open slopes of native grass, provides good quality livestock grazing. Many of the upland farmers in the area have mixed operations and depend significantly on the Peace River slopes for summer grazing. Most of these south-facing slopes are public lands under grazing dispositions administered by the Public Lands Division.

Market gardening and specialty crops are grown on the highly productive river flats. The well-drained sandy and silty loam soils, the opportunity for irrigation, shelter from the wind, added heat units and long summer daylight hours provided by the south-facing river valley allow the production of many crops not normally adapted to the area. The market gardens are found in numerous small parcels and are predominantly privately owned. Most have fairly well-developed access. (In most cases, the local government maintains the road to the valley floor.) The Peace valley produces 14 per cent of the province's field tomatoes and over 20 per cent of the province's cucumbers and cabbages, some of which are sold to the province's major urban markets.

Fisheries:

The Peace River contains populations of sportfish, including Arctic grayling, northern pike, goldeye, bull trout (Dolly Varden),

walleye and yellow perch. The fishery is under-used, probably as a result of anglers' preference for clear water which is not found in the Peace River with its high silt load. Most angling is done at the mouths of the tributaries.

Of the major tributaries to the Peace River, significant fisheries are located in the Smoky River and the Pouce Coupe River. These rivers support pike populations, and walleye are found near their confluence with the Peace River. The Clear River, Sneddon Creek, Montagneuse River, Hamelin Creek, Ksituan River, Fourth Creek and Saddle (Burnt) River provide no or minimal fishing opportunities. Pike or walleye may spawn in many of these streams during the spring high-flow period. Walleye are found at the mouths of most of these streams.

Heritage:

The Peace River valley contains outstanding historical, palaeontological and archaeological resources on which considerable work has been undertaken. A brief summary of each resource follows.

Historical Resources:

Dunvegan is the most significant site on the upper Peace River. The Fort Dunvegan post was established by the North West Company in 1805 and subsequently operated by the Hudson's Bay Company until 1918. The associated gardens are still under cultivation and the Factor's House remains standing. A competitive free trader's post was established on the opposite side of the river by Henry "Twelve Foot" Davis. Other features of this site include Roman Catholic and Anglican missions, a Royal North West Mounted Police post and a cable ferry.

There are also two sites upstream from Peace River. The archaeological remains of one have not been positively identified. The site may be Macleod's Fort (North West Company-1790) or St. Mary's House II (Hudson's Bay Company-1819). The other site is the Oblate St. Augustine's Mission founded in 1888. The church remains standing.

Palaeontological Resources:

There are two main bedrock formations in the upper Peace River valley. One, the Dunvegan Formation, possesses diverse fossil resources, including marine and non-marine invertebrates and some unidentified vertebrate remains. There are 17 known productive localities in the Peace River valley. Many more undoubtedly exist, and the diverse fossils in this area are most important to stratigraphic and taxonomic/palaeoecological research efforts. Assessment of palaeontological resources before any digging or disruption of bedrock is essential.

Prehistoric and Archaeological Resources:

The upper Peace River valley has been extensively occupied since the glacial recession 11 000 to 12 000 years ago. A total of 104 prehistoric sites have been recorded in the valley to date, and the potential for discovery of additional highly significant sites on the river terraces is high. While none of the known sites has received intensive study, evidence of extensive long-distance trade and sophisticated technology exists. The environmentally distinctive plains of the upper Peace River basin supported a greater abundance of plants and animals than surrounding regions. As a result, prehistoric groups developed communal bison hunting methods and associated camps.

Settlement:

Although the Peace River was a major fur trading route, with early settlement dating back to the late 1700s, major settlement did not occur until the early 1900s, following railway construction into the region. The steepness of the Peace River valley and its tributaries has had a major influence on the road and settlement patterns in the area. Locations on the river in close proximity to a given settlement may be two hours or more apart by road.

The clearing of land for agriculture within the region continues even today. With the creation of new farms comes increased population (Table 1) and a rising demand for recreation services.

Table 1: Historic Population Growth[1]

1921	1931	1941	1951	1961	1971	1981
4 912	11 766	14 344	15 500	16 705	16 957	17 153

Source: South Peace Regional Planning Commission

Many of the communities have historical ties to the river dating back to the early settlement of the region. Activities such as logging and milling at Carter Camp and Old Mill Site, and ice hauling at Pratt's Landing are such examples of early pioneer activities. It is important that some of these early sites be protected and developed to provide a link to the past.

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[1] Population figures are for ID 19, ID 20, ID 21, MD Peace, MD Fairview, MD Spirit River, and all towns and villages within them. Figures for the Town of Peace River are not included.

Minerals:

The exploration and development of mineral resources is strictly controlled within the valley breaks of the Peace River. Portions of the proposed recreation areas are under petroleum and natural gas dispositions, but there are currently no productive wells, petroleum and natural gas fields, or other significant mineral activities on these sites.

The development of site-specific recreation facilities is not likely to affect, or be affected by, the exploration and development of petroleum and natural gas resources.

Many sand and gravel deposits are located within the valley breaks of the Peace River. Development of these essential resources is strictly controlled, and approval is subject to site-specific conditions. Of the 18 recreation sites under review, five have approved sand and gravel operations in close proximity and a number of additional sites may also contain these resources.

Timber:

There are coniferous and hardwood timber resources within the Peace River valley. The most significant coniferous area, found on the south bank of the river in the Many Islands area, is part of Canadian Forest Products (Canfor's) Forest Management Agreement (FMA) area. A smaller amount of coniferous timber is located in the vicinity of the Eaglesham site. The Smoky-Peace Point Local Integrated Resource Plan generally does not permit timber harvesting in the river valley near the Eaglesham site.

Harvesting and other forest management activities will be done according to Forest Management Agreements, regulations and provincial operating ground rules. These activities will be modified as necessary to recognize areas with important recreation values. Landscape logging and buffer zones are two such modifications.

Much of the timber resource in the Peace River valley is located on slopes too steep and unstable to log using present harvesting systems.

Water:

Water withdrawn from the Peace River is used mainly for domestic and agricultural purposes. One industrial user, Dome Petroleum, operates at the proposed Cotillion site. The river's flow rate is sufficient to support a variety of recreational uses, and considerable potential exists for deriving additional benefits by creating expanded recreational opportunities.

While there have been evaluations of the hydro-electric power potential of the Peace River, there are no indications at this time that a dam site will be developed. In the event of dam construction,

however, all recreation sites upstream would be flooded. The W.A.C. Bennett Dam in British Columbia does not affect downstream recreational uses significantly. The water level of the Peace River fluctuates with spring runoff and summer rainfall. At these times, flooding of riparian lands can occur. Also, ice jams on the river can cause damage to structures from ice or by backflooding to levels that may exceed the 100-year flood event by as much as two metres (6 ft.).

In spite of a high sediment load, water quality in the Peace River is suitable for water-based recreation. Construction of a pulp mill has commenced at Taylor, British Columbia. This facility may have some impact on water quality. Alberta Environment will monitor the downstream water quality. There is currently no agreement between Alberta and British Columbia regarding water quality.

Wildlife:

The Peace River valley and its tributaries provide a wildlife habitat corridor through an area of agricultural development. This corridor supports high wildlife populations, which benefit consumptive and non-consumptive users. The maintenance and enhancement of this habitat is a primary objective of the Fish and Wildlife Division.

The Peace River valley between the British Columbia border and the Town of Peace River is key wildlife habitat for mule deer, white-tailed deer and moose. The Fourth Creek area provides exceptionally good mule deer habitat. The islands in the Peace River in the vicinity of Eaglesham, Elk Island Park and Shaftesbury Ferry provide key waterfowl nesting and staging habitat.

Development of a recreation site results in two main types of impact on the wildlife resource. The first is loss of habitat at the site. In most cases, this is of relatively minor concern. The second and more significant impact is the loss of large areas of habitat because of human activity. Especially in the case of a campsite with road access, associated non-motorized and motorized activity is likely to be dispersed, resulting in the loss of a large habitat area.

2.3 Overall Principles and Resource Objectives

The provisions and recommendations developed by the planning team are based on four principles: (1) preserving the natural environment; (2) creating opportunities for recreation and tourism; (3) minimizing conflicts with other resource uses; and (4) recognizing the importance of existing local settlements. These principles have guided the site development proposals. They will continue to be used during the development of plans for each site.

1. Preserving the Natural Environment

The recreation potential of the area is directly related to the natural and aesthetic qualities of the river valley. Any development of recreation sites must preserve these qualities. It is also important to foster public awareness of the environmental sensitivity of the river valley, and a sense of responsibility towards its protection.

2. Increasing Tourism and Recreational Use

There is considerable opportunity to increase tourism and recreational use of the Peace River valley. Realizing the full potential of the area is a long-term goal best pursued in stages. There are roles for both the private and public sectors in the development of opportunities for recreation and tourism.

3. Minimizing Conflicts Between Resources

A limited number of sites in the river valley have potential for recreation development. There are also areas of critical wildlife habitat in the valley and important existing uses (notably agricultural development). There is potential for the future development of other valuable resources such as sand and gravel. Proposals for the development of recreation sites will: (1) be balanced fairly with the interests of other resource sectors; (2) contain guidelines to minimize the negative impacts which the use and development of recreation resources may have on other sectors; and (3) be feasible and cost-effective.

4. Recognizing Local Settlements

In the short term, the primary users of increased recreation development will be the local residents. In the longer term, these residents are the most likely to benefit from any stimulated economic activity resulting from development. Local residents have a particular affinity for the Peace River valley. Its existence has shaped local history, the local economy, and local settlement and access patterns. Any recreation and tourism development should take place in a manner that maintains this continuity and reflects local aspirations and needs.

Resource Objectives

The following resource objectives support the principles stated above.

1. To protect the ecological and historical resources of the Peace River valley.

   Rationale - The ecological and historical resources of the Peace River valley are of considerable significance and also contribute to the recreational value of the area. These resources are,

however, highly susceptible to negative impacts associated with the construction and use of recreation facilities and must be safeguarded accordingly.

2. To ensure development of recreation sites takes place in a manner that minimizes environmental impacts and risks.

   Rationale - Maintaining the beauty of the river valley is essential to providing quality recreational experiences. Also, because the river valley slopes are prone to natural slumping and slides, it is desirable to minimize physical impacts on the environment and related damage to structural developments.

3. To focus on existing routes for road access and, when considering upgrading, to ensure that construction and maintenance costs are thoroughly evaluated.

   Rationale - Using existing access will minimize costs and land disturbance. Costs must be weighed against benefits since the proposed recreation sites are relatively small and the instability of the river valley slopes creates very high road construction and maintenance costs.

4. To ensure timely co-ordination between providing access to sites and development of the recreation sites.

   Rationale - Typically in the Peace country, increased recreational use of sites has preceded access improvement. Because of the soils and steepness of the river valley, a rain shower may quickly make an unimproved vehicle trail impassable. This could be a problem if recreation development attracted increased use before trails were upgraded at the Carter Camp, Many Islands, Cotillion, Pratt's Landing and Eaglesham sites. Local authorities and Alberta Transportation and Utilities must work closely to ensure an effective link between access and site development.

5. To educate the public on the use and management of recreation sites along the river.

   Rationale - Promotional methods can be used to remedy the lack of public awareness related to the use and management of recreation sites along the river.

6. To identify campgrounds and other opportunities in the Peace River valley that could be established by the private sector.

Rationale - The Peace River valley, when properly developed, will be promoted by the local tourist associations, communities and the province. This will attract Albertans and out-of-province visitors to the area and will provide an opportunity for new businesses.

7. To provide for a variety of recreational opportunities along the river that primarily serve local needs, but also are available to other users from the region and the rest of the province.

   Rationale - A resource with the size and significance of the upper Peace River valley has the potential to satisfy a wide range of recreational uses. The residents of adjacent communities will be the primary user group served. A certain amount of use, however, is likely to occur from the region as a whole and, to a lesser extent, from other areas of the province. Over the long term, the amount of use from these last two categories is likely to increase.

8. To link development of recreational sites to the historical characteristics of the river.

   Rationale - The history of the Peace River is a significant component of tourism and recreation development, and is of particular importance at several sites.

9. To ensure full consideration of other resource values of sites.

   Rationale - If other uses are not considered, conflicts will occur. For example, if development occurs on ungulate winter range, these animals may disappear from the area as a result of increased hunting pressure or from the presence of recreational activities. In effect, the development of recreational opportunities (facility development and increased access) may displace hunting.

10. To ensure that the interests of existing users are fully addressed.

    Rationale - In addition to the large number of existing recreational users, numerous landholders may be affected by development of recreation sites. Several recreation sites are either on, or accessed through, public lands under grazing disposition. There are also private lands close to several of the sites, and some sites are near existing sand and gravel leases. Reservations for the purpose of consulting interested agencies or protecting the sand and gravel resource also exist on lands being considered for recreation use.

11. To evaluate construction and maintenance costs when producing development proposals for recreation sites.

Rationale - There can be high construction, operating and maintenance costs associated with providing access and developing and servicing recreation sites. An evaluation of such costs should be weighed against the benefits of providing sites.

12. To ensure development of recreation sites satisfies local requirements.

    Rationale - The local community will not only be the main client but, in many cases, the operator of recreation sites. The amount and type of recreation development must meet local recreation demand and not exceed local resources.

13. To make provision for staged development of recreation sites.

    Rationale - Development of major tourism and recreation attractions in the Peace River valley is not practical in the short term. The pace of site development should reflect available resources and the nature of the market. Development of remote sites, in particular, should be tied to increasing demand.

14. To ensure that private and public property is protected and that obvious hazards are made clear.

    Rationale - It is important to foster respect for private and public property, and to ensure that users are aware of potential risks such as the depth and speed of the river, unstable slopes, bears, etc.

2.4 Site Development and Management Guidelines

The following guidelines will be applied to all development of recreation sites proposed in this plan. They are consistent with the principles and objectives discussed in the previous section, and ensure a consistent approach to recreational development of sites along the upper Peace River valley. The guidelines are presented under identified topic areas and are not listed in order of priority. Each set of guidelines is followed by an explanation.

Note: Provincial government agencies with resource management responsibilities are notified when disposition applications are made. Certain conditions are commonly placed on applications. In other cases, a detailed site plan will be required before appropriate conditions can be established.

The following broad guidelines focus on requirements specific to the river valley that go beyond the standard conditions typically required. The broad guidelines below (and the rest of the document) establish a clear framework of expectations, so that there should be "no

surprises" providing development of the sites conforms to this plan.

Topic: **Addressing erosion hazards and cost-effectiveness in access and site development**

Guidelines:

1. Site plans should include measures to confine motorized vehicle use to the recreation area.

2. A buffer of undisturbed vegetation at least 100 m (300 ft.) wide must be left between banks of the Peace River and any new permanent buildings unless specifically exempted by the written direction of a land use officer.

3. Roads to individual sites must be built to the standard specified by the development classification (pp. 19-20) and site development and management guidelines.

4. The potential for flooding should be considered during site planning and development, particularly at those sites where construction of buildings may occur.

   Rationale - The Peace River banks and valley slopes are actively eroding. Water erosion is caused by the river itself, by water from other sources flowing down long, steep slopes or banks, and by sub-surface drainage or springs. The valley walls and banks are unstable; and slumps and slides often occur. The above guidelines are intended to ensure that the construction of and access to facilities does not accelerate these natural processes.

   When locating or constructing facilities, the danger of periodic flooding must be considered. For example, the estimated rise in water for a 100-year flood would be 5.5 metres (18 ft.) above mean water levels.

Topic: **The relationship between existing grazing dispositions and development of recreation sites**

Guidelines:

1. Withdrawal of land from a grazing lease for its inclusion in a recreation lease or licence of occupation should preferably be with the lessee's consent.

2. Signs stating "Caution Livestock at Large" should be posted on access roads.

3. Texas gates should be considered at entrances to licenses of occupation where the existing fence crosses the road, and at the entrances to fenced campsites.

4. The fencing of cattle away from traditional water sources should be carefully planned. Alternative supplies should be identified.

Rationale - Access to most of the recreation sites north of the river, and to some of the sites south of the river, involves either crossing or site development on grazing dispositions. The grazing lessees are allowed to make use of the lands in accordance with conservation and proper range management practices.

Generally, lessees do not mind people travelling across their lease. An unfenced road through a lease and a picnic/campsite area will generally not disturb livestock. Most lessees permit foot or horseback access to their grazing leases, but would like to be contacted first. (Many post the "Use Respect" signs). Problems arise when people take their vehicles or motorcycles off the access road or hunt near livestock. This may increase with developed access roads. Increased off-highway vehicle use, especially on steep slopes, will lead to accelerated soil erosion. A lessee holding public land under a grazing disposition is legally entitled to post leased land to prohibit or restrict access.

Recreation sites often occur at or near traditional livestock watering areas. In some cases, no natural alternatives are available. A conflict could arise if the recreation site were fenced out from the grazing lease to reduce cattle disturbance. This would require planning on a site-specific basis by the grazing lessee, the Public Lands officer and staff from other interested agencies. Depending on the individual lease, government funds may be available to aid in construction of alternative water sources.

Topic: **Recreation sites and wildlife habitat**

Guidelines:

1. Bear-proof garbage containers must be installed at all new sites, and it is recommended strongly that such containers be used at all existing sites (Cotillion, Carter Camp, Elk Island Park, Eaglesham, Tangent Park, Mackenzie Cairn, Strong Creek Park and Fort Macleod).

2. Garbage collection must be frequent enough to ensure that each bin's capacity is not exceeded.

3. There is to be no use of recreation facilities, except at the Cotillion, Dunvegan, Tangent Park, Fort Macleod, Strong Creek and Mackenzie Cairn sites, between December 15 and May 15. This restriction is to be implemented by not plowing the access roads and by installing gates.

   Rationale - The impact of recreation developments on wildlife populations can be lessened by carefully controlling the availability of sites and by site management.

Topic: Recreation Sites and Historic Resources

Guideline:

1. Resource uses resulting in land surface disturbance may require Historical Resources Impact Assessments at the expense of the developer, before development occurs, as outlined under Section 33(2) of the Historical Resources Act.

   Rationale - Advance notice of each development is necessary to assess the potential of the proposed development area, and the extent of possible land surface disturbance. Recommendations can then be made to protect historical resources with minimum delays to the development.

Topic: Recreation Sites and Sand and Gravel Developments

Guideline:

1. All proposed recreation sites adjacent to existing or potential sand and gravel deposits should incorporate design features to minimize potential disturbances (traffic, noise, dust, etc.).

   Rationale - Good quality sand and gravel deposits are rare in the Peace country, and the Peace River valley is a key source for road materials. It is important to safeguard these supplies and to ensure minimal conflict with recreation uses.

Topic: Developing and Operating Recreation Sites

Guidelines:

1. All facilities should be developed and landscaped in a way that will minimize line-of-sight from the river.

2. Recreation dispositions will be issued for each site proposed for intensive development (i.e., roads, campstalls, parking, buildings, barbecue pits and picnic areas). To protect recreation values in the vicinity of the site, lands adjacent to the site will be placed under a protective reservation by the

provincial government.

3. Design and construction of all boat launching facilities will consider fluctuating water levels and seasonal freeze-up.

4. The location and design of recreational developments must be planned to minimize impacts on the natural environment.

   Rationale - The remoteness and wilderness values of the river valley are a major attraction, and the location and development of recreation areas should not reduce these values. Also, controlling the size of dispositions ensures that lessees' responsibilities are manageable while minimizing the amount of public land designated for single-sector uses.

2.5 Classification of Recreation Sites

Each of the sites identified on the "Recreational Opportunities" map of the Peace Valley Conservation and Recreation Committee was evaluated by the planning team. In evaluating the sites and type of development, the following factors were considered:

- Present ownership: private, public - dispositions and reservations;
- Use: historical, existing, potential;
- Access: existing and potential, cost of construction and maintenance;
- Site characteristics and capability: topography, vegetation, water, soil stability, erosion;
- Scenic qualities;
- Interpretive potential;
- Recreational opportunities: variety of potential, types of facilities, site attributes;
- Fisheries and wildlife: quality of habitat, seasonal use, number and variety of species present, likely impacts;
- Historical, archaeological and palaeontological values;
- Sand and gravel: existing, potential;
- Agriculture: existing use on private land and public land under disposition, potential conflicts;
- Settlement: relationship of historical and existing settlement to recreation site use;
- Spacing along the river: distance between sites;
- Proximity to local communities;
- Preferences of the local people; and
- Distance to emergency services.

This information has been used to determine the best use for each of the recreation sites. This information has been provided by the Peace Valley Conservation and Recreation Committee, the Mackenzie and

South Peace Regional Planning Commissions, and the participating provincial government agencies.

For each site, capability evaluations were provided by Forestry, Lands and Wildlife for primitive camping areas, fully serviced campgrounds, picnic areas, permanent buildings, septic tank fields, road location, and sources of sand and gravel. Additional information was also provided on boat launching, depth and flow characteristics of the river, and effects of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam on river flow.

Recognizing the desirability of providing for a variety of recreational opportunities along the river, and based on an evaluation of the above site-specific factors, each individual area has been assigned to a particular class of recreation site (Figure 1). Several of the sites listed are already developed. In these cases, the assignment to various classes either confirms existing use (e.g., Fort Macleod, Strong Creek, Mackenzie Cairn) or identifies development potential (e.g., Tangent Park, Eaglesham). Other proposed sites presently have no or minimal facilities and varying levels of use. In all cases, the intent of the classification is to identify a suitable level of development for the various sites. In terms of actual site developments, the intent is for staged growth responsive to such factors as budget priorities and recreation use levels. In the case of the Class 1A and 1B sites in particular, development of site facilities will likely be staggered over a number of years.

The proposed recreation site categories are as follows.

Class 1: RECREATION SITES WITH ROAD ACCESS

Level A - Developed campgrounds

Developed campgrounds may have a full range of on-site services (power, running water, showers, vault or flush toilets, central service and shelter buildings, concession stands and a sewage disposal station). Provisions will be made to accommodate recreation vehicles. There will be an all-weather road to the site, and individual areas for camping. The following recreation areas are assigned to this site classification:

Cotillion
Pratt's Landing
Dunvegan
Tangent Park
Strong Creek Park

Level B - Basic campgrounds

Basic campgrounds may provide limited on-site services (firewood, barbecue pits, picnic tables, pit or vault toilets, a water pump, picnic shelter and a garbage station). There will be a dry-weather road to the site. The following recreation areas are assigned to this site classification:

Many Islands
Carter Camp
Elk Island Park
Eaglesham

Level C - Day use areas

These areas will provide for day use at historical sites or viewpoints. Facilities will likely be limited to picnic tables. The following recreation areas are assigned to this site classification:

Mackenzie Cairn
Fort Macleod Historical Park

Class 2: DAY USE RECREATION SITES WITH RIVER ACCESS

River access sites provide day use access to an attraction accessible only by the river. Site development will be minimal. The following recreation areas are assigned to this site classification:

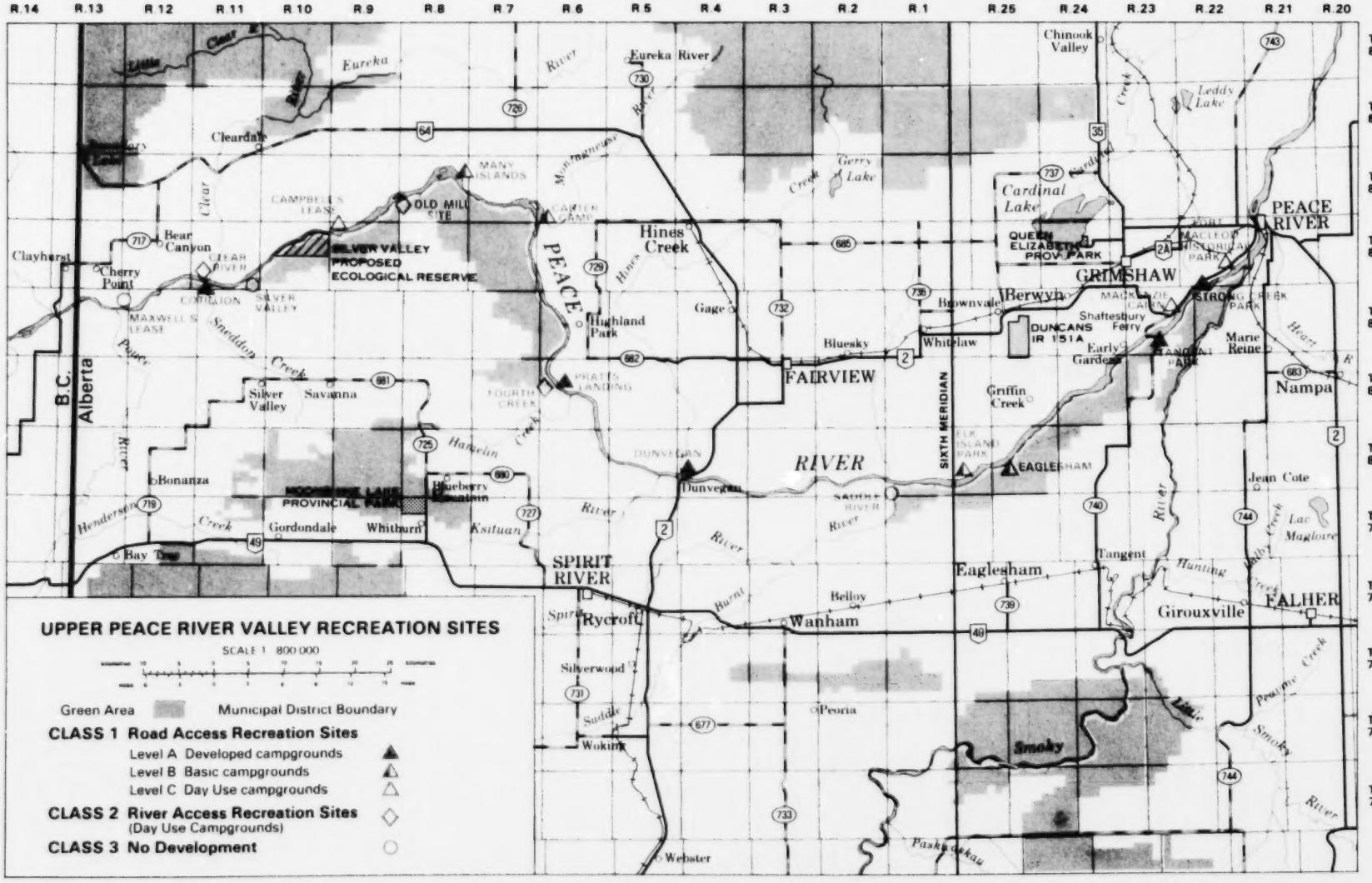
Clear River
Campbell's Lease
Old Mill Site
Fourth Creek

Class 3: NO DEVELOPMENT SITES

"No development sites" are those for which development at the present time is not recommended. These sites may have potential for development in the future. The following sites are assigned to this classification:

Maxwell's Lease
Saddle River
Silver Valley

The "no development" designation does not affect any casual or informal use that currently takes place at these sites.


R.14 R.13 R.12 R.11 R.10 R.9 R.8 R.7 R.6 R.5 R.4 R.3 R.2 R.1 R.25 R.24 R.23 R.22 R.21 R.20
Tp 86 Tp 85 Tp 84 Tp 83 Tp 82 Tp 81 Tp 80 Tp 79 Tp 78 Tp 77 Tp 76 Tp 75
B.C.
Alberta
Eureka River
Cleardale
Clayhurst
Cherry Point
Bear Canyon
CLEAR RIVER
SILVER VALLEY PROPOSED ECOLOGICAL RESERVE
OLD MILL SITE
MANY ISLANDS
CAMPBELL'S LEASE
CARTER CAMP
MAXWELL'S LEASE
COMPANION SILVER VALLEY
Silver Valley
Savanna
Bonanza
MOONRISE LAKE PROVINCIAL PARK
Blueberry Mountain
Gordondale
Whitburn
Bay Tree
Hines Creek
Highland Park
Gage
PEACE RIVER
PEACE POINT LANDING
FOURTH CREEK
DUNVEGAN
Dunvegan
FAIRVIEW
Bluesky
Whitelaw
Brownvale
Griffin Creek
SIXTH MERIDIAN
ELK ISLAND PARK
EAGLESHAM
SPIRIT RIVER
Rycroft
Silverwood
Woking
Belloy
Wanham
Eaglesham
Tangent
Peoria
Webster
Pashkokau
Chinook Valley
Leddy Lake
Cardinal Lake
QUEEN ELIZABETH PROV. PARK
PEACE RIVER
GRIMSHAW
Berwyn
MACKENZIE CAIRN
DUNCANS IR 151A
Shaftesbury Ferry
Early Gardens
STRONG CREEK PARK
Marie Reine
Nampa
Jean Cote
Lac Magloire
Girouxville
FALHER
Smoky
Little Smoky
Prairie Creek
Saddle
Burnt
Hunting
Valley Creek
Heart R.
Sheddon Creek
Hamelin Creek
Henderson Creek
Ksituan
Montagneuse
Gerry Lake
Creek
River
UPPER PEACE RIVER VALLEY RECREATION SITES
SCALE 1 800 000
Green Area
Municipal District Boundary
CLASS 1 Road Access Recreation Sites
Level A Developed campgrounds
Level B Basic campgrounds
Level C Day Use campgrounds
CLASS 2 River Access Recreation Sites
(Day Use Campgrounds)
CLASS 3 No Development

3. RECREATION SITES

This section provides a brief summary of the individual sites, their classification, rationale and priority.

The sites are presented beginning with the site nearest to the British Columbia border. Distances (Mile #) are expressed first in distance measured from the British Columbia border and secondly in the distance to the next site downstream. The left bank of the river is noted as the north side under location.

3.1 Maxwell's Lease

Recreation Class: No development (3) **Priority: N/A**

Descriptive Data

Location: North side **Municipality:** ID 21
Mile #: 3.75/7.5 **Land Status:** Public
Administration: White Area **Legals:** 25-82-13-W6M
Reservations: PNT 0543.3.100 (Surface Materials Potential) on N 1/2 25-82-13-W6M; and PNT 0110.3.110.710 (Erosion Hazard)
Dispositions: Grazing Lease #35521

Site Summary

- No formal arrangements in place for recreation use
- No facilities
- Informal use as picnic area by local residents
- Access trail crosses private and public (leased) land
- Little use from river or by hunters
- Attractive site, interesting topography, variety of vegetation types, good view

Site Classification Rationale

- Proximity to Clear River site
- Developed campground and playground to the north
- Poor river access

3.2 Clear River

Recreation Class: River Access Day Use (2) **Priority: 2**

Descriptive Data

Location: North side
Mile #: 11.25/0.75
Administration: White Area
Reservations: None
Dispositions: Grazing Lease #35671

Municipality: ID 21
Land Status: Public
Legals: 8-83-11-W6M

Site Summary

- No formal arrangements in place for recreation use
- No facilities
- Informal use as picnic area by local residents
- Access trail crosses private and public (leased) land
- Area of historical interest east of the Clear River (old foundation and site of old Roman Catholic Mission)
- The Old Man Hoodoo is in the vicinity of this site.

Site Classification Rationale

- Good river access
- Good view of two river valleys
- Some hunting/fishing use
- Attractive site, variety of vegetation types.

Proposed Uses

- Identifying sign
- Picnic area, tables and lean-to's
- Hiking trails

Implementation

Signs will be provided by Improvement District 21.

NOTE: In the future, this site is suitable for development of a basic campground (Class 1B), dependent on demand and ID 21's priorities.

3.3 Cotillion

Recreation Class: Developed Campground (1A) Priority: 1

Descriptive Data

Location: South side
Mile #: 12.0/3.75
Administration: Green Area
Municipality: ID 20
Land Status: Public
Legals: Ptn E 1/2 5-83-11-W6M

Reservations: Gravel deposit immediately west of site under reservation to Alberta Transportation and Utilities (DRS 80065) and a private operator (SML 800058)

Dispositions: Application for recreation lease #860014 by ID 20; Licence of Occupation #860164 to ID 20 (access road from Dome site to river)

Site Summary
- Existing use by local residents for boat launching
- Some cross-country skiing and ATV use
- Site plan drafted by South Peace Regional Planning Commission; ID 20 has applied for a recreation lease
- Site identified for fisheries access development

Site Classification Rationale
- Identifying sign
- Existing road adequate for RVs
- Local demand
- Attractive sandstone cliffs and hoodoos on Snedden Creek

Proposed Uses
- Identifying sign
- Fully serviced campground
- Boat launch
- Picnic area and tables
- Hiking and cross-country ski trails

Site Development and Management Guidelines
1. Year-round access to this site will be maintained.
2. Some upgrading and incorporation of erosion control measures will be required on the access road.

Implementation

Improvement District 20 will be responsible for the lease and the conditions to the lease.

3.4 Silver Valley

Recreation Class: No development (3) **Priority: N/A**

Descriptive Data

Location: South side
Mile #: 15.75/8.25
Administration: Green Area
Municipality: ID 20
Land Status: Public
Legals: 6 & 7-83-10-W6M
1 & 12-83-11-W6M

Reservations: Adjacent gravel bars on the river in SW 12 and SE 11 are under reservation to Alberta Transportation and Utilities DRS 1082; PNT 0120.3.710 (Fragile Slope Hazard) on NE and W 1/2 6 & 7 -83-10-W6M and W 1/2 1 and all 12-83-11-W6M; and CNT 0323.1 (Municipal Park Potential) on 6 & 7-83-10-W6M and 1 & 12 -83-11-W6M.

Dispositions: None

Site Summary

- Some local use
- Periodically accessible by 4-wheel drive vehicle
- Close to Silver Valley Ecological Reserve

Site Classification Rationale

- Proximity to other sites on river
- Cost of access development

3.5 Campbell's Lease

Recreation Class: River Access Day Use (2) **Priority: 2**

Descriptive Data

Location: North side **Municipality:** ID 21
Mile #: 24.0/6.75 **Land Status:** Public
Administration: White Area **Legals:** 31 & 32-83-9-W6M
Reservations: CNT 0541.1 (Surface Materials Exploration) on E 1/2 and SW 31 and W 1/2 32-83-9-W6M; and CNT 0323.1 (Municipal Park Potential) on S 1/2 32-83-9-W6M
Dispositions: Grazing Lease #37361

Site Summary

- No existing facilities
- Use by local residents - boat launch and picnics
- Cattle watering site
- Some fishing and hunting use
- Scenic drive to river
- Gentle slopes, open aspect, islands in river

Site Classification Rationale

- Access trail to the area unsuitable for general day-use; too costly to upgrade
- Site attributes
- Local preferences

Proposed Uses

- Identifying sign
- Picnic area and tables

Implementation

Signs will be provided by Improvement District 21.

3.6 Old Mill Site
(Hemstock's Mill)

Recreation Class: River Access Day Use (2) Priority: 1

Descriptive Data

Location: South side
Mile #: 30.75/3.75
Administration: Green Area
Reservations: CNT 0323.1 (Municipal Park Potential)
Dispositions: None
Municipality: ID 20
Land Status: Public
Legals: 18-84-8-W6M

Site Summary

- Occasional use by river traffic
- Access via old logging road, effectively impassable
- Key wildlife habitat
- Site of old sawmill

Site Classification Rationale

- Cost of access
- Wildlife concerns
- Site attributes
- Historical/interpretive potential
- Good river access

Proposed Use

- Identifying sign
- Interpretive trail

Site Development and Management Guideline

The site will be protected through the reservation system.

Implementation

Signs will be provided by Improvement District 20. No formal maintenance is required.

3.7 Many Islands

Recreation Class: Basic Campground (1B) **Priority: 1**

Descriptive Data

Location: North side **Municipality:** ID 21
Mile #: 34.5/10.5 **Land Status:** Public
Administration: White Area **Legals:** NE26 and SE35-84-8-W6M
Reservations: PNT 0411.3.710 (Ungulate Winter Range); CNT 0541.1 (Surface Materials Exploration) on N 1/2 26; and PNT 0312.3 (River Recreation Site Potential) on LSD 15 and W 1/2 LSD 16-26-84-8-W6M and LSDs 2, 3 and 4-35-84-8-W6M.
Dispositions: Site accessible through Grazing Lease #49067 (1-85-8-W6M).

Site Summary
- Remains of access road to old gravel pit provides access part way. Some slumping/drainage problems
- No facilities and little current use, some picnicking
- Good views, scenic drive to river, islands in river
- Key wildlife habitat

Site Classification Rationale
- Compromise between wildlife concerns and recreation potential
- Existing access can be reconstructed
- Proximity to primary highway
- Ideal location for local use by residents of Worsley-Cleardale community

Proposed Use
- Identifying sign
- Picnic area and tables
- Camping
- Boat launch

Site Development and Management Guideline
Developments at this site will be modified somewhat from those specified for the basic campground class as follows:

- the road will be of a better quality than usual for a basic campground site; and
- facility development will be less than usual for a basic campground site. Acceptable developments are: signs, boat launch, viewpoint, picnic tables, outhouses, barbecue pits, hand pump, garbage station and firewood.

Implementation
Improvement District 21 will be responsible for the lease and the conditions to the lease.

3.8 Carter Camp

Recreation Class: Basic Campground (1B) **Priority: 1**

Descriptive Data

Location: North side
Mile #: 45.0/15.0
Administration: White Area
Municipality: ID 21
Land Status: Public
Legals: 31-83-6-W6M and 6-84-6-W6M
Reservations: PNT 0120.3.100 (Fragile Slope Hazard) on 6-84-6-W6M.
Dispositions: Grazing Lease #34515 on 6-84-6-W6M.

Site Summary
- Used by residents of Hines Creek area
- Picnic tables and garbage facilities
- Some ATV use
- Site of logging and mill operation
- Some gold panning
- Cattle watering area
- Scenic drive to river, good views, islands in river
- Trail access

Site Selection Rationale
- Site access (only upgrading necessary)
- Site attributes
- Interpretive potential
- Historical use

Proposed Uses
- Identifying sign
- Picnic area and tables
- Boat launch
- Camping
- Hiking trails
- Viewpoint

Site Development and Management Guidelines

1. The site design plan should recognize the historical value of the site.

2. The recreation site will require fencing to separate it from the grazing lease area.

Implementation

Improvement District 21 will be responsible for the lease and the conditions to the lease.

3.9 Fourth Creek

Recreation Class: River Access Day Use **Priority: 2**

Descriptive Data

Location: South side **Municipality:** ID 20
Mile #: 60.0/0.75 **Land Status:** Public
Administration: Green Area (N 1/2 S.30)
White Area (S 1/2 S.30) **Legals:** 30-81-6-W6M
Reservations: PNT 0155.3.100.710 (Watercourse Protection) CNT 0323.1 (Municipal Park Potential); PNT 0411.3.710 (Ungulate Winter Range) on SW 30-81-6-W6M.
Dispositions: None

Site Summary

- Waterfalls on Fourth Creek
- Candidate natural area, meets all qualifying criteria
- Rough footpaths to waterfalls
- Occasional use by river traffic

Site Selection Rationale

- Site sensitivity and conservation value
- Absence of trail access
- Extremely good mule deer habitat

Proposed Uses

- Identifying sign
- Boat landing area

Site Development and Management Guideline

A natural area reservation (PNT 0344.710,730 - conservation natural area, no surface dispositions) should be placed on the creek and waterfalls area and south-facing slopes north of Fourth Creek (Twp 81-6-W6M; NW 30, those portions of LSDs 3 and 4 of Sec. 31 west of the Peace River; Twp 81-7-W6M; N 1/2 25. N 1/2 26, NE 27, SE 34, LSDs 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Sec. 35 and LSDs 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Sec. 36; in total, an approximate area of 1 440 acres). The existing reservation in this area should be maintained. An ungulate winter range reservation will also be placed on the creek valley.

Implementation

Signs will be provided by Improvement District 20.

3.10 Pratt's Landing

Recreation Class: Developed Campground (1A) Priority: 1

Descriptive Data

Location: North side
Mile #: 60.75/17.25
Administration: White Area
Reservations: PNT 0155.3.100,710 (Watercourse Protection) on SW 29-81-6-W6M.
Dispositions: Grazing Lease #31504

Municipality: MD 136 (Fairview)
Land Status: Public
Legals: SW 29-81-6-W6M

Site Summary
- Traditional use as camping and picnic area by residents of the Highland Park-Fairview area
- Site used by local residents to obtain ice in 1930s
- Some barbecue pits and picnic tables
- Existing access
- River access good, natural boat launch area
- Good views

Site Selection Rationale
- Site attributes
- Existing access
- Interpretive potential
- Historical use

Proposed Uses
- Identifying sign
- Picnic area and tables
- Boat launch
- Camping
- Hiking trails

Site Development and Management Guidelines

1. The site design plan should recognize the historical value of the site.

2. The recreation site will require fencing to separate it from the grazing lease area.

Implementation

Municipal District of Fairview will be responsible for the lease and the conditions to thc lease.

3.11 The Dunvegan Area
(including Historic Resources Site, the Provincial Recreation Area and the Maples site)

Recreation Class: Developed Campground (1A) Priority: 1

Descriptive Data

Location: North side
Mile #: 78.0/18.0
Administration: White Area
Municipality: MD 136 (Fairview)
Land Status: Public
Legals: NE and NW 8-80-4-W6M
Reservations: Adjacent gravel bars on the river in N 1/2 7 are under reservation DRS 739 to Alberta Transportation and Utilities
Dispositions: None

Area Summary

For a description of the area, see Figure 2.

Historic Site

- operated by Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism
- buildings on site include St. Charles Church (1886), rectory (1889) and Factor's House (1877 - 78)
- site of Fort Dunvegan (1805), associated gardens (dating from 1806) still under cultivation.

Dunvegan Provincial Recreation Area

- operated by Alberta Recreation and Parks
- operates about 30 camping units
- picnic area and adjacent confectionery

Maples site

- operated by MD Fairview (136)
- site original location of St. Saviour's Anglican Mission
- developed as day-use picnic site. Site has barbecue pits, access to parking area, picnic tables, washrooms, cistern for water supply and playground area.

Surrounding lands

- numerous small parcels of private and public land
- market gardening
- Dunvegan Bridge an attraction

Site Selection Rationale

- Existing use
- Location
- Accessibility

Proposed Uses

- Identifying signs
- Boat launch
- Additional camping
- Cross-country skiing and hiking trails
- Additional camping

Site Development and Management Guidelines

1. Upgrading of the campground and picnic area should take place at the Dunvegan Provincial Recreation Area.

2. There should be no campground development at the Maples site.

3. An appropriate site should be identified for development of a boat launching facility.

4. The historical values of the area should be given priority in future upgrading or development plans.

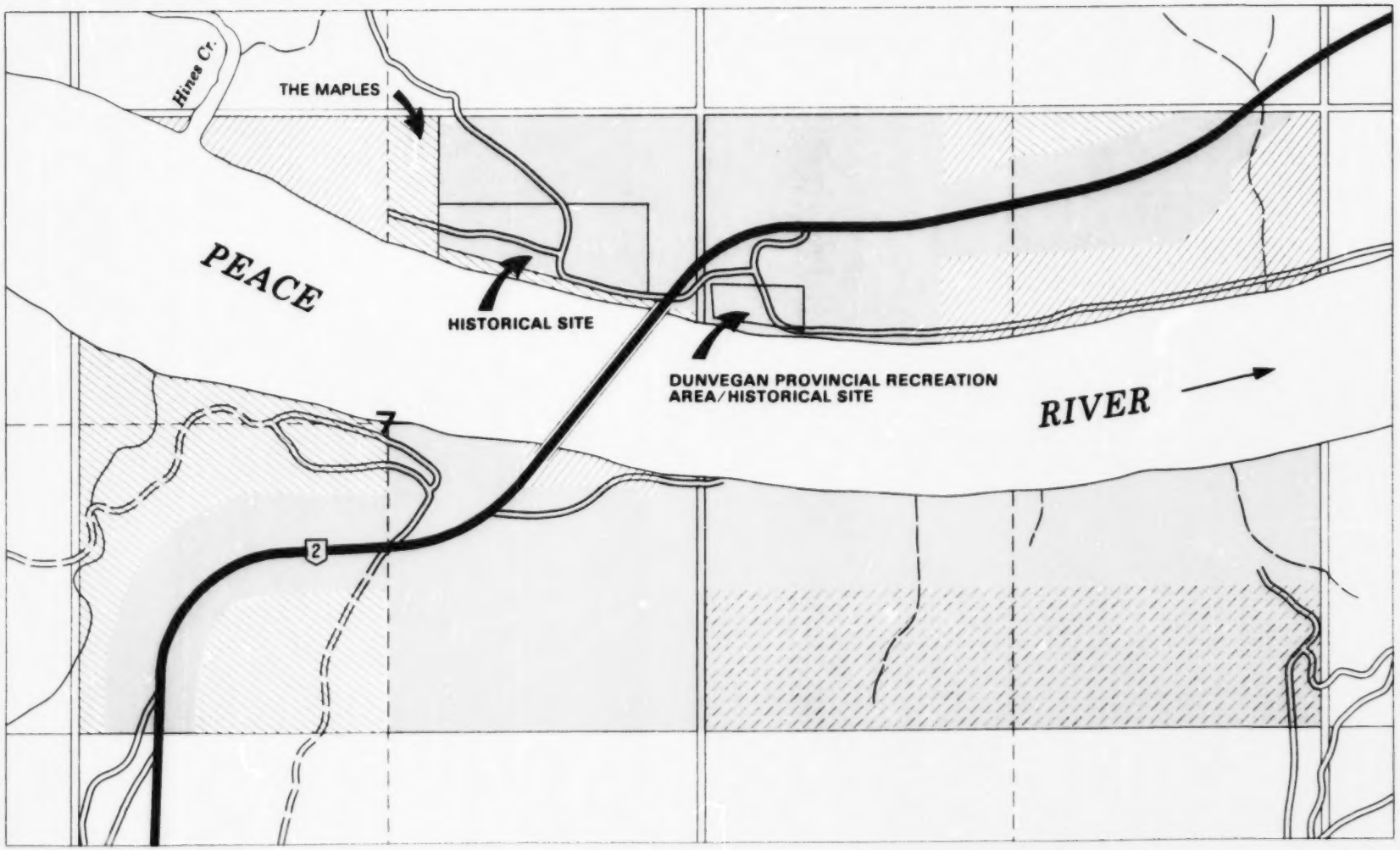
Implementation

The Municipal District of Fairview and the appropriate provincial departments will be responsible for the operation, improvement and maintenance of the sites.

DUNVEGAN AREA

Sec 7, 8 TP 80 R 4 W 6

SCALE 1 : 15 000



Crown

Grazing Lease

Patent Land (private ownership)

Patent Land (titled to municipality or society)

Figure 2. THE DUNVEGAN AREA

3.12 Saddle River
(Burnt River)

Recreation Class: No development (3) **Priority: N/A**

Descriptive Data

Location: South side
Mile #: 96.0/5.25
Administration: Green Area
Reservations: PNT 0411.3.710 (Ungulate Winter Range); and PNT 0155.3.710 (Watercourse Protection).
Dispositions: None
Municipality: ID 19 (Birch Hills)
Land Status: Public
Legals: NW 5 and NE 6-80-1-W6M

Site Summary

- No facilities and minimal use
- River prone to siltation from Saddle River
- Potential use by Wanham area residents

Site Classification Rationale

- Cost of providing access
- Smoky-Peace Point Local Integrated Resource Plan (1987) recognizes dispersed recreation as suitable in this area
- Limited use potential
- Site adjacent to wildlife habitat enhancement area

3.13 Elk Island Park

Recreation Class: Basic Campground (1B) **Priority: 1**

Descriptive Data

Location: North side
Mile #: 101.25/4.5
Administration: White Area
Municipality: MD 135 (Peace)
Land Status: Public
Legals: W 1/2 10-80-26-W5M
Reservations: PNT 0120.3.100 (Fragile Slope Hazard) on NW 10-80-26-W5M.
Dispositions: Recreation Lease #840024 to MD 135 (15 acres); Licence of Occupation #850573 on access road; surrounding land under Grazing Lease #35639

Site Summary

- Area surrounded by chain-link fence
- Parking stalls (some for trailers)
- Outhouse, firepits, picnic tables
- Long history of local use
- Shallow water impedes launching of larger boats

Site Classification Rationale

- Existing access, maintained by MD (recent ditching program)
- Existing and potential use

Proposed Uses

- Sign identifying the site
- Improved picnic area and tables
- Camping

Implementation

The Municipal District of Peace shall be responsible for the lease and the conditions to the lease.

3.14 Eaglesham

Recreation Class: Basic Campground (1B) **Priority: 2**

Descriptive Data

Location: South side
Mile #: 105.75/17.25
Administration: Green Area
Municipality: ID 19 (Birch Hills)
Land Status: Public
Legals: Ptns LSDs 5 and 6 of 18-80-25-W5M

Reservations: Adjacent gravel bars on the river are under reservation DRS 810164 to Alberta Transportation and Utilities; and CNT 0541.1 (Surface Materials Exploration) on SW 18-80-25-W5M.
Dispositions: Recreation Lease #800026 to Eaglesham District Agricultural Society (20.3 acres); Access road under Licence of Occupation #800899 to Eaglesham District Agricultural Society.

Site Summary

- Picnic tables, sports field and some camping
- Good scenic viewpoints from access road
- Road slumping a problem
- Local use
- Gravel operations in area

Site Classification Rationale

- Identifying sign
- Existing access
- Existing and potential use

Proposed Uses

- Improved and expanded picnicking and camping facilities
- Boat launch
- Improved and expanded sports field

Site Development and Management Guideline

Site design plans should be developed in consultation with Alberta Transportation and Utilities to minimize potential conflicts between gravel operations and recreational uses, and to ensure developed and maintained access.

Implementation

The site is currently operated by the Improvement District of Birch Hills and the Eaglesham and District Agricultural Society.

3.15 Tangent Park
(Shaftesbury)

Recreation Class: Developed Campground (1A) Priority: 1

Descriptive Data

Location: South side
Mile #: 123/4.5
Administration: Green Area
Municipality: ID 19 (Birch Hills)
Land Status: Public
Legals: Ptns LSDs 9 and 10 of 8-82-23-W5M

Reservations: Alberta Transportation and Utilities holds a reservation permitting sand and gravel removal on part of the S 1/2 LSD 9 and 10 (immediately south of the recreation lease boundary). PNT reservations for potential sand and gravel have been initiated on Sec. 9, SW8, LSD 13 of 5 and LSD 6 of NE6.
Dispositions: Recreation Lease #800008 to Municipal Affairs for ID 19 (69.3 acres)

Site Summary
- Well-maintained facility with camping stalls, picnic tables and sports fields
- Good views from valley breaks

Site Classification Rationale
- Existing and potential use (some tourist potential)
- Existing, good access
- Smoky-Peace Point Local IRP (1987) recommends intensive recreation development and White Area designation for this area

Proposed Uses
- Identifying sign
- Improved picnic area and sports fields
- Fully developed campground
- River access
- Hiking/horseback riding trails
- Viewpoints
- Boat launch

Site Development and Management Guidelines

1. The potential for a hiking and cross-country ski trail linking Peace Point should be assessed. Any development must be compatible with the provisions of the Smoky-Peace Point Local IRP.

2. Any extraction of sand and gravel deposits adjacent to this site must occur in a manner that minimizes impacts on recreational values and uses.

3. Any future expansion of this site because of increasing tourism use may affect adjacent sand and gravel reservations and would require agreement from Alberta Transportation and Utilities.

Implementation

The site will be developed and operated by the Improvement District of Birch Hills and the Tangent Board of Trade.

3.16 Mackenzie Cairn
(Fort Fork)

Recreation Class: Day Use Area (1C) **Priority: 2**

Descriptive Data

Location: North side
Mile #: 127.5/3
Administration: White Area
Municipality: MD 135 (Peace)
Land Status: Federal land
Legals: Part River Lot 19, Shaftesbury Settlement

Reservations: None
Dispositions: Approximately 0.305 acres, titled to Her Majesty the Queen, in the Right of Canada.

Site Summary

- Historical site with cairn and two picnic tables
- Some parking stalls
- Site well used and maintained

Site Classification Rationale

- Existing use
- Other recreational opportunities catered to at nearby sites

Proposed Uses

- Identifying sign
- Improved access trail to river

Implementation

Canadian Parks Services is currently responsible for the operation and maintenance of the site.

3.17 Strong Creek Park

Recreation Class: Developed Campground (1A) **Priority: 2**

Descriptive Data

Location: North side
Mile #: 130.5/2.25
Administration: White Area
Municipality: MD 135 (Peace)
Land Status: Municipal land
Legals: Part River Lot 25, Shaftesbury Settlement

Reservations: None
Dispositions: 15.11 acres, more or less, titled to Municipal District of Peace No. 135.

Site Summary

- Developed park with water supply (2 500 gallon cistern), outdoor washrooms, camping sites, picnic tables, parking area, children's playground (swings, slide and climbing frame) and baseball fields.

Site Classification Rationale

- Designation recognizes existing use.

Proposed Uses

- Sign identifying site
- Continued maintenance, possible additional development and expansion as a long-term prospect.

Implementation

Because the land is deeded, the Municipal District of Peace is entirely responsible for the operation and maintenance of this site.

3.18 Fort Macleod Historical Park

Recreation Class: Day Use Area (1C) **Priority: 2**

Descriptive Data

Location: North side
Mile #: 132.75
Administration: White Area
Municipality: MD 135 (Peace)
Land Status: Public
Legals: Part River Lot 32, Shaftesbury Settlement

Reservations: None
Dispositions: Approximately 0.66 acres, titled to Her Majesty the Queen, in Right of the Province of Alberta, as represented by the Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism.

Site Summary

- Fenced-off historical marker
- Picnic tables

Site Classification Rationale

- Existing use
- Other recreational opportunities catered to at nearby sites

Proposed Uses

- Sign identifying site
- Improved picnic area

Site Development and Management Guideline

Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism and the Municipal District 135 should enter into an agreement to ensure adequate upkeep of this site.

Implementation

Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism is currently responsible for the operation and maintenance of the site.

4. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

4.1 Context

This document is the first step in developing the identified sites. It represents approval in principle by the Government of Alberta for the development of those sites to the level identified.

It must be recognized, however, that much remains to be done, including:

- preparation of access and site plans for each site;
- approval of site plans by government agencies;
- lease approvals;
- funding applications;
- budget development at local level;
- tendering;
- construction; and
- operation and maintenance.

Site recreation leases will generally be issued to the municipality in which the site is located. Lease application will be handled through the Public Lands Division of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. Municipalities must provide a detailed site plan that is consistent with direction in this document for each recreation site.

4.2 Funding

Because of budget constraints, special provincial funding will not be available to assist with the implementation of this plan at this time. Funding for the construction and operation of these recreation sites will have to be through local authority budgets. Various programs and grants may be sources of funding for development of the identified sites.

Provincial government agencies will provide technical advice and information upon request on any matter relating to the tourism and recreation concept for the Peace River valley.

4.3 Responsibilities

While the development and operation of recreation sites is primarily a municipal responsibility, it is recommended that site management responsibilities be given to local groups recognized by the municipality.

The Peace Valley Conservation and Recreation Committee should continue as the primary group responsible for ensuring effective co-ordination between the various involved municipalities and for overseeing the overall implementation of this document. There should be ongoing communication between this committee and the Peace River Regional Resource Management Committee.

Until such time that approved integrated resource plans are in effect to guide the use and development of all resources in the river valley, local authorities should be advised of any additional proposals for recreation site developments on public lands before any development occurs.

4.4 Overall Theme and Co-ordination

To effectively promote the concept of a recreational theme for the river valley, and to encourage a joint commitment and cost-effective approach by all participants, the following measures should be pursued.

1. A common logo and series of signs should be designed.

2. An interpretive brochure/booklet/map should be developed to identify the various sites, discuss the various features and characteristics of the Peace River valley, and emphasize user responsibilities.

3. A seminar or report should be developed to promote high quality site management to assist with the education of people assigned the responsibility for managing, maintaining and operating the various recreation sites.

4. A garbage maintenance program should be devised through the joint effort of local municipalities, the provincial government and local community groups.

4.5 Dunvegan Boat Launch

The popularity of the Dunvegan area makes it an ideal choice for the development of a boat launch. Unfortunately, the north side of the river is shallow, and providing road access to the south bank may conflict with the safety standards of Transportation and Utilities. Two possible locations for a boat launch on the north bank have been proposed by the Dunvegan River Rats, a local group. These warrant further study. The local authorities, Transportation and Utilities, and the local residents continue to investigate the best site for the boat launch and related road access.

4.6 Plan Amendment

Because of the site-specific nature of this plan, it is realized that changes could occur to alter the recommendations, especially the site categories. Such changes may be in response to increased demand for recreation use at the site, impacts on resources, or changes in the priorities of the local authorities.

The following measures will be required when an amendment to the plan is proposed.

1. Plan reviews or amendments may be requested by any local authority or agency of the provincial government.

2. Proposals to review or amend the plan will be made in writing and circulated to:

(a) all member municipalities of the Peace Valley Conservation and Recreation Committee;
(b) the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife;
(c) all of the provincial departments that were members of the planning team or who were consultants to the planning team;
(d) the Mackenzie and South Peace Regional Planning Commissions; and
(e) any other local or provincial government department or interest group affected by the proposed change.

3. Proposals to review or amend the plan will include the following information:

(a) purpose of the review or amendment;
(b) objectives;
(c) background information; and
(d) the specific proposal to review or amend the plan.

4. Until direction in this plan is included in approved integrated resource plans, minor changes to the plan should be noted in applications for development or leases. These applications and proposed minor changes will be reviewed through the referral system.

5. Until direction in this plan is included in approved integrated resource plans, proposed major changes to the plan will be subject to the approval of the local authorities and the provincial government.

6. When a proposed minor change, as outlined by sub-section (4), is considered to be a major change to the plan by one of the local authorities or one of the departments of the provincial government, the proposed change must be processed according to sub-sections (2) and (3) and be subject to the approval of the local authorities and the provincial government.

7. The provisions of this plan will be incorporated in subsequent integrated resource plans which include this area. Thereafter, any future changes should follow the integrated resource plan review and amendment procedures.

4.7 Future Tourism Opportunities

As this plan is implemented, and as the economic situation changes, the development of recreation and increased levels of use in the river valley may lead to increased potential for tourism. Should this occur, the recreation concept for the valley may require modification. At that time, private sector operations and tourist facilities should be identified and promoted. These may include campsites and tourist accommodations, as well as gas stations, boat rentals, guiding and outfitting, and river tours. It is recognized that, by creating a tourism industry, other land uses will be affected and issues may arise.